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pones, and are as well able to create as cure diseases, as ignorant in preparing a medicine as in composing a charm, and better skilled in weaving deceits than in relieving pains.

It is remarkable in the Abiponian physicians that they cure every kind of disease with one and the same medicine. Let us examine their method of healing. They apply their lips to the part affected, and suck it, spitting after every suction. At intervals they draw up their breath from the very bottom of their breast, and blow upon that part of the body which is in pain. That blowing and sucking are alternately repeated. If the whole body languishes, if it burns with malignant heat, if it is seized with measles or small-pox, four or five of these harpies fly to suck and blow it, one fastening his lips on the arm, another on the side, a third and fourth on the feet. If a child cries, or refuses the breast, the mother gives him to a juggler to be sucked. This method of healing is in use amongst all the savages of Paraguay and Brazil, that I am acquainted with, and, according to Father Jean Grillet, amongst the Galibe Indians. I have known matter sucked from an ulcer and blood from a wound with utility, the materials of the corruption that would have ensued being by this means exhausted. Spaniards or Indians, when stung by

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1755 a serpent, get some friend to suck the part affected, that the poison may be extracted before it spreads over the limbs. I do not therefore blame the Abipones for having their wounds, ulcers, and serpent-bites sucked: their superstition lies in suffering that office to be performed by none but the jugglers, and in believing the faculty of healing imparted to them by their grandfather. Though they at the same time believe that one excels another in the salubrity of his lips and breath, and in his healing powers. Another point in which this sucking is to be condemned is, that they use it as an universal remedy against every disease. I knew an European in Paraguay eminently versed in the medical art, who, from having made successful use of the herb fumitory, obtained the name of Doctor Fumitory. In the town of St. Thomas there was an Indian healer of the sick, who, when asked what medicine he gave to such or such a patient of his, uniformly replied, "I gave him vervain, Father." Having found this herb do good to one individual, he indiscriminately prescribed it to all sick persons under whatever disease they laboured. The Abipones, still more irrational, expect sucking and blowing to rid the body of whatever causes pain or inconvenience. This belief is constantly fostered by the jugglers with fresh artifices. For when

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they prepare to suck the sick man, they secretly 755
put thorns, beetles, worms, &c. into their mouths, and spitting them out, after having sucked for some time, say to him, pointing to the worm or thorn, "See here the cause of your disorder." At this sight the sick man revives, when he thinks the enemy that has tormented him is at length expelled: for as imagination is often the origin of sickness, it may also be that of health. Moreover, it is not surprizing that after many days sucking the pain should be relieved, which would have ceased of its own accord, by the benefit of time alone. I do not deny that the Abipones generally recover; but for that they are indebted to their natural strength, not to the juggler who sucked them. To him, however, they religiously ascribe the 756
praise and the glory of their recovered health; to him they give horses, arms, garments, or any thing belonging to the convalescent person. Neither is it from gratitude that they do this, but from fear; being firmly persuaded that the disease will return again unless they reward the physician to the utmost of their ability. Alas! how many infants have we seen fainting, pale, languid, dying, and soon dead from having their little bodies exhausted by constant sucking! The savage mothers must be certainly mad, since they still persist in this insane practice,

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poured forth a volley of curses on his ungrateful patient. "You had better call up a devil from hell, Fathers," said he, "to cure this beast. When I offered him medicine, the savage tried to kill me: he opposes a lance to a syringe. Who could contend with such unequal arms?" The Guaranies have the same repugnance to the use of the syringe. The Indians use snuff as a medicine, stuffing it into their ears, when they find them badly affected by the rain or wind. The jugglers vauntingly affirm, that they have it in their power to perform cures by words alone. Sitting on the sick man's bed they sing extemporary verses, as magical charms, either to reconcile the evil spirit, or to call up the shades of the dead by whose assistance they hope to remove all diseases. But away with this superstitious nonsense. The Abiponian physicians show how little they confide in their own arts, when, on being seized with a disorder, they neglect to consult their colleagues, and prefer the aid of any European who will prescribe for them. At the time that I dwelt amongst the Abipones, the most famous in the art of medicine was Pariekaikin, the chief of the jugglers, who, on being seized with pleurisy, called on me to heal him in preference to any of his colleagues. Calcined hartshorn, boiled in barley-water, re-

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They who have received wounds in the battle deliver themselves to be sucked to a crowd of juggler physicians, a multitude of spectators admiring and extolling their constancy and fortitude. Great numbers flock to behold the spoils and trophies taken from the enemy. The women, giving way to an excess of gladness, seem mad with joy; they would make no end of singing, leaping, and applauding, were they not obliged to turn their attention towards making preparations for the public drinking-party of their husbands; who, at the same time that they wash the horrible colours from their faces, endeavour to clear from their minds, with wine, their past anxiety respecting the conflict. In the assembly of drinkers, where the victory is celebrated amidst confused clamours, and songs accompanied with the sound of gourds and drums; when all are heated with liberal draughts of mead, each begins to relate his own brave actions, and to laugh at the errors, cowardice, and flight of others; which not being endured by any of the Abipones, the warriors contend furiously amongst themselves, first with fists, and then, growing more enraged, with spears and arrows. Did not the women interpose to effect a reconciliation, and employ themselves in snatching away their weapons, and leading their husbands home, it is beyond xxxx doubt that more would be killed after the battle than in the battle.

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